

May 1891.]

*Correspondence.*

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high power, and seems to be due to the presence of a row of inosculating craters gradually diminishing in size from the foot of the wall of Barrow to the termination of the valley north of Goldschmidt. Another noteworthy circumstance in connection with it is that it is bordered on either side by a bank of some altitude, which was a very obvious feature on January 17. There is a prominent crater situated at the foot of the western bank and close to the bottom of the northern slope of Barrow, which does not appear in the maps.

The western side of W. C. Bond consists of an irregular double range of mountains of considerable altitude, extending from the neighbourhood of the deep crater B in the interior to the north side of Archytas. It follows a slightly serpentine course without, however, deviating to any great extent from a direct line. Two peaks on the more easterly range throw magnificent spires of shadow across the floor at sunrise, which, with the almost equally imposing shadow of W. C. Bond B, make up a very striking telescopic picture. Schroeter (Tab. lxi. fig. 1) shows a cleft running from the north wall of Archytas along the west side of the mountains just referred to, and Schmidt draws a coarse crater-row in nearly the same situation, both probably representing a valley between parallel heights. Beyond the western border is a large enclosure, Archytas C, bounded by hills of no great altitude, except on the extreme west, where they culminate in a very curious triple-peaked mountain. Neither Mädler, Neison, nor Schmidt show any detail in connection with W. C. Bond B, though a  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -in. achromatic reveals a good-sized crater on the floor close to it on the north. There is another just under the west border, also an easy object, shown only by Schmidt, and he represents a third on the south-west wall of  $\beta$ , of which I have no record.

Beaumont House, Shakespeare Road,  
Bedford, 1891, April 18.

THOS. GWYN ELGER.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

*To the Editors of 'The Observatory.'*

*Comet a, 1891.*

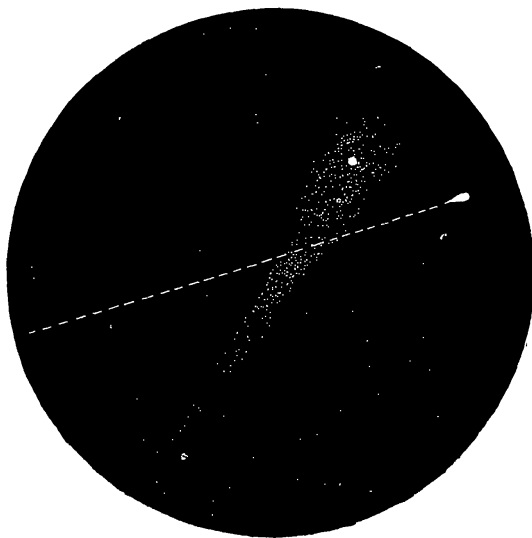
GENTLEMEN,—

While comet-seeking on the evening of March 30 at 9<sup>h</sup>, with a 10-inch reflector, power 40, I picked up a bright nebulous object in Andromeda. As I failed to identify it with any of the conspicuous nebulae which had become familiar to me during previous sweeps in this region, I concluded it to be a comet. A few minutes sufficed to reveal motion. The new comet appeared round, with a bright central condensation, but it was unfavourably placed in the mist over the N.N.W. horizon, and details were uncertain. At 16<sup>h</sup> 30<sup>m</sup> I reobserved the object, and found it very obvious,

though the gibbous Moon was up. The daily motion I judged to be  $70'$  to the S., or more exactly S.S.E.

Another observation was obtained on March 31,  $8^h 30^m$ , but the comet was indistinct in a hazy sky.

On April 4,  $8^h 30^m$  it was again seen, and the atmosphere being unusually clear, the comet appeared much brighter than on previous occasions. It had a delicate tapering tail, so exceedingly



Comet and Meteor, 1891, April 4.

diaphanous that it could only be caught by glimpses. It stretched over certainly more than half the field of  $50'$  (power 60) which I was using, though its precise limits were indeterminate, perhaps owing to the faint twilight lingering in that quarter. At  $8^h 35^m$  a telescopic meteor, about 8th mag., crossed the comet just under the head, and the effect produced for a moment was very interesting.

Cloudy weather ensued, and the comet was not seen again. It is now lost in the Sun's rays. Prof. Barnard, of the Lick Observatory, appears to have discovered the same body on the evening of March 29, though my telegram conveyed the first intimation of the new object to the chief observatories in Europe. The comet is passing rapidly southwards, and it is to be hoped that its course will be watched from the southern hemisphere when it emerges from the Sun's rays at the latter part of May.

It is singular that it eluded detection until it had drawn so near its disappearance to northern observers. The comet would probably have been found here early in March but for extremely unfavourable weather. As an example of how unsuitable our climate is liable to be for this class of observation, I may mention that between March 3 and April 11 comet-seeking was only practicable on two nights.

Yours faithfully,

Bishopston, Bristol, 1891, April 13.

W. F. DENNING.